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HOME SWEET HERITAGE HOME

History buffs applaud proposal that could save more historic residences

metroNEWS



Leigh Matheson is an advocate for preserving heritage homes.

KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

Police union investigating treasurer

FINANCES

Official alleged to have used credit card for vacation



Kevin Maimann
Metro | Edmonton

Edmonton's police union is investigating after members allege the organization's treasurer used a work credit card for a personal trip.

Bill Clark's expenses came to light at the union's general meeting last fall when former president Maurice Brodeur disclosed that Clark charged a rental car and other personal costs to a union card while in Palm Springs. He later repaid the expenses.

A police officer who attended the meeting reached out to Metro recent-

ly, on condition of anonymity, saying Clark's actions violate union bylaws.

When contacted by Metro, Brodeur confirmed that in early 2015 he became aware of Clark's "inappropriate" use of the card and cautioned him not to use it for personal reasons.

Brodeur said he later became aware of prior instances in which Clark had used the card for personal expenses, but believes they were all repaid.

"From what I'm aware of, it never happened again after I cautioned him," Brodeur said.

Union President Bob Walsh, who took over from Brodeur in August, confirmed he is investigating Clark's expenses.

He said the results of the investigation will be made available to members but likely not to the public. He also said he will conduct a full audit of union credit card usage, but added that no money is currently missing.

Executive order President Trump's revised Muslim ban also put on hold metroNEWS

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7,942

Crisis diversion events in all of 2016, and 1,020 in January 2017 alone

55%

Percentage of calls precipitated by homelessness in 2016, compared to 51.9 per cent precipitated by intoxication

56%

Percentage of calls that resulted in people being transported to an emergency shelter

SOURCE: CRISIS DIVERSION: A YEAR IN REVIEW 2016, CIVITAS CONSULTING

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Ryan Harding, rescue van manager at Hope Mission, says the Crisis Diversion Team's efforts are freeing up first responders.

KEVIN TUONG/METRO EDMONTON

VIOLENCE

Road rage case delayed

A man accused of breaking a woman's arms in what Edmonton police have called a road-rage attack has had his case put over until next Wednesday.

Jared Matthew Eliasson, who is 28, has been charged with attempted murder, possession of a dangerous weapon and aggravated assault.

Eliasson, wearing an orange prison jumpsuit, appeared briefly in court on closed circuit television from the Edmonton Remand Centre.

His lawyer said he hopes to set a date for a bail hearing at the next court date.

Police have said a 34-year-old woman was driving to her home on March 7 and honked her horn while passing a car that was stopped on a residential street.

When she got out of her vehicle outside her home, a man ran up and attacked her with a crowbar. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Snowshoers thought to be dead in avalanche

RCMP say two American snowshoers are presumed dead in an avalanche near Lake Louise. Police say their vehicle was found at a trail head on the Icefields Parkway. Parks Canada says safety specialists found snowshoe tracks leading to avalanche debris with no tracks coming out. Their families have been notified but names will not be released. THE CANADIAN PRESS

otherwise find themselves sent to jail or an emergency room.

"Sometimes, when we're talking about an intoxicated individual on the street, they don't need police intervention, they just need someone to wake them up, transport them and get them somewhere safe," said Hope Mission's Ryan Harding. "We can take them someplace with resources to get help and free up (emergency responders) to do things they're more equipped to do."

But a manager of Edmonton's 24/7 Crisis Diversion Team said the acknowledgment of success reinforces his belief that there's more work ahead.

The team, a collaboration between Hope Mission, Boyle Street Community Services, REACH Edmonton and other community organizations, was established in November 2015 to intervene in situations where vulnerable people would

7,943 crisis diversion events in all of 2016 and for every dollar spent, the audit said \$3.66 has been saved in avoided emergency, justice and social costs.

The team's presence on the streets has certainly been appreciated by the Edmonton Police Service.

"Not too long ago, on Friday and Saturday nights our holding cells were full of individuals who had various level of intoxication that we had to provide care for," said Supt. David Veitch at an event celebrating the program's early success Wednesday.

"We would bring in real bad guys, for robberies and dealing drugs, and we had no place to

put them. So this idea of diversion is very important in getting [people] to places of safety so those individuals who are more able to deal with them appropriately can."

Harding says the benefits to society are undeniable, but adds the need still far outweighs the team's ability to intervene in all possible crises.

"I think we're on the right trajectory, the collaboration as a whole has been really successful doing what it has been mandated to do and achieving our goals," said Harding. "But it's also our role to advocate (for more social supports) so there can be some change within the system and in resources."

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Mayor sees no transit cash fix

BUDGET

But Iveson looking for 'promising hints'

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Edmonton

Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson doesn't expect budget day in Alberta to solve the city's transit funding woes but he believes it will offer a tantalizing taste of things to come.

In his submissions to Finance Minister Joe Ceci earlier this year, Iveson asked the province to revamp its funding formula for major transit infrastructure so that Alberta and the federal government combined fund 90 per cent of up-front costs.

Leaving Edmonton with the remaining 10 per cent would allow the city "to keep up with the investments of other order of government over the long term," Iveson's letter read.

On the eve of the budget, Iveson told media he's not ex-



Mayor Don Iveson has asked the province to revamp its funding formula for major transit infrastructure so that Alberta and the federal government combined fund 90 per cent of up-front costs. COURTESY CITY OF EDMONTON

pecting that ask to be fulfilled just yet.

"Realistically, we know we're not likely to get all of the details on the province's approach to transit funding because we're still waiting for the federal government to announce what they're going to be doing," Iveson said Wednesday.

But that doesn't mean there won't be clues scattered throughout the budget. "We'll be looking for promising hints about the province using proceeds from the carbon levy to support things like LRT, the electrification of our bus fleet and things we've been talking to them about at length," he said.

“

Realistically, we know we're not likely to get all of the details.

MAYOR'S VIEW

What Iveson wants from Alberta's budget:

Hospital infrastructure

"One thing I'll be looking for is investments in hospital infrastructure in Edmonton. We know that in particular, Royal Alexandra is long overdue, perhaps decades overdue, for re-investment compared to other facilities around the province."

Social housing

"We'll be looking for specific projects that have had planning investments actually move ahead to construction and some signals that the province is ready to start to ramp up in social housing and permanent supportive housing."

a deficit. That's not going to be a surprise for anybody, I think."

This year, Alberta is on track to run a \$10.8-billion deficit. The interest on debt payments has surpassed \$1 billion and government borrowing exceeds \$32 billion.

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Edmonton could lead the way in driverless vehicles

TECHNOLOGY

CEO says city must alter rules to snag \$30M per year chance

 **Jeremy Simes**
Metro | Edmonton

Edmonton is sitting on a \$30-million-per-year economic opportunity, and it comes in the form of driverless (or automated) vehicles.

That's according to Brad Ferguson, the president and CEO of the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC), who pushed city councillors Wednesday to jump on the driverless wave before it's too late.

"There's an opportunity right now," he said. "If we show the world the co-ordinated approach, we have a huge opportunity to win at this."

Automated vehicles are driverless or self-driving vehicles that detect the surrounding street environment, using artificial intelligence, sensors and global-positioning-system co-ordinates.

Ferguson said Edmonton is the perfect testing ground for the industry, as businesses want to see how the vehicles fare in colder climates.

But it's going to take more than talk to rake in \$30 million annually, if businesses invest in testing sites in the next few years.

 **We have a huge opportunity to win at this.**

Brad Ferguson

NEXT STEPS
City councillors tasked administration with determining possible funding options to be part of the driverless wave.

Staff will also return with a plan on developing a cross-departmental team for automated vehicles. That partnership would include the EEDC.

Mayor Don Iveson will also write to the province requesting support for testing driverless vehicles in the city.

Officials will return in June with their findings.

forward idea grew faster than Reynolds could have anticipated.

Within the first few weeks, Nike called her up with a partnership offer, using SpikeBee as a go-to for their camps — and not just the Calgary ones.

"That just blew us away. They had hundreds of events, camps and programs. It was so overwhelming but so exciting," said Reynolds.

"We hit the ground running from there and haven't stopped."

Two years later, they've listed around 25,000 activities



Brad Ferguson, president and CEO of the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, says the city needs to jump on the driverless vehicle wave before it's too late. JEREMY SIMES/METRO

from 400 companies. SpikeBee makes its money from a 3.99 per cent transaction fee, but they also give back 10 per cent of those fees to non-profits.

Although Reynolds currently runs the company with her husband, she was a single mother when the idea first occurred to her.

Having just landed in Calgary from South Africa, by way of England, her daughter was eager to join a fashion camp and find cool new interests. Reynolds began searching everywhere for information and was frustrated that it was

pretty much all over the map on the net.

It was that experience that inspired her to bring together all that information and present it in a way that parents could find events that fit within their budgets and schedules.

She hopes to use the AccelerateAB experience to increase awareness about SpikeBee and help it grow. The accelerator includes a full day of mentorship and a pitch contest next month.

For more information on the company, visit spikebee.com.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

SpikeBee marketplace accelerating ahead

 **Aaron Chatha**
Metro | Calgary

Alberta's top accelerator program has chosen the 15 most promising start-ups from the province to take part this year — including Calgary's SpikeBee.

SpikeBee is an online platform where companies can list activities like camps, classes and events for kids.

Jo-Anne Reynolds launched the company in 2015, with five local camps. The straight-



Jo-Anne Reynolds
ELIZABETH CAMERON / FOR METRO

DEVELOPMENT City mulls deep cut to required parking

As Edmonton's inner city becomes denser, municipal officials are betting future residents won't require two street parking stalls in front of their homes.

Backed by some city councilors Wednesday, Edmonton proposed a plan at the urban planning committee that would reduce the number of street parking spots that developers must accommodate when building houses.

The changes — which need final approval when they go to public hearing next month — would only require one street parking stall when builders construct homes. Currently, developers are required to allow at least two stalls.

Staff said the reduction would lessen construction costs and allow for more diverse housing options.

Gary Hoeft, a construction manager with a home-building company, agreed with staff. He said it could help developers save up to \$10,000 on a \$400,000 home.

"We're finding that people don't want a second car," Hoeft said. "We're finding the expansion of transit is meeting people's needs."

But Coun. Scott McKeen raised concerns with the changes. He said the city may lack analysis on how the move would affect neighbourhoods.

"I think there's a potential gap here in some areas. I'm not saying the entire city," he said. "I'm a little worried this will cause a rumpus unnecessarily."

 **We're finding that people don't want a second car.**

Gary Hoeft

But staff argued the change would be gradual, as the rules won't apply to current properties.

"The parking spaces that are there now won't be going away," said Anne Stevenson, a principal planner with the City of Edmonton.

Mayor Don Iveson agreed.

"Longer term, it will have an impact," he said. "But I think that's OK. I think that's the aspiration for city building. Infill will occur and more of it will occur. I think there will be a trend to lower car ownership."

He said if conflicts arise, issues would be mitigated by better transportation and implementing time restrictions for street parking.

JEREMY SIMES/METRO



PC leadership race frontrunner Jason Kenney has consistently said he is "pro-life." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pro-choice push PCs

LEADERSHIP RACE

Coalition worries abortion access at stake

Kevin Maimann
Metro | Edmonton

Alberta pro-choice advocates are pushing PC leadership candidates to stand up for abortion access.

The Alberta Pro-Choice Coalition emailed a survey to each of the three candidates asking seven questions about reproductive rights on Feb. 22 and none responded, said spokesperson Kathy Dawson.

She said the seeming lack of interest in the issues is troubling especially considering there are no women gunning for the party leadership.

"It needs to be discussed because one of the candidates has a terrible anti-choice voting history and he won't address it," Dawson said, referring to frontrunner Jason Kenney and his voting record as a federal member of Parliament.

"The access issues impact women, trans men and non-binary people, and they are not represented in this race."

The new PC leader will be chosen on Saturday.

Dawson said abortion access in Alberta is limited to one clinic each in Edmonton and Calgary, as well as a hospital

in Calgary and one in Grande Prairie, and some doctors are harassed or threatened for performing the procedure.

While abortion rights are guaranteed in the Canadian charter, the coalition is worried about losing already-limited access if politicians don't stand up to protect it.

"We are really concerned about rural and northern women," Dawson said.

Kenney has consistently said he is "pro-life."

The anti-choice Campaign Life Coalition gives his federal voting record a "perfect" score on life and family issues, noting he voted against adding gender identity and expression to the Human Rights Act in 2013, and in 2012 voted in favour of a failed motion to set up a parliamentary committee that would study when life begins.

Asked about the survey, a spokesperson for Kenney provided an email statement saying his campaign receives numerous surveys and it would be impossible to respond to every one.

"For anyone who's followed our campaign, Jason's has been clear that he will not legislate on contentious social issues," Blaise Boehmer wrote.

Byron Nelson and Richard Starke are also running for PC leadership.

Former candidates Sandra Jansen and Donna Kennedy-Glans, who were the only women in the race, both dropped out in November.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Open online Indigenous course launched

Pushpa Balgobin
For Metro | Edmonton

The University of Alberta is hoping to take Canadian Indigenous issues global with the launch of a massive open online course, or MOOC, on Wednesday.

According to university officials, over 3,000 people around the world have already registered to take the online course,

which is a free course open to anyone with an Internet connection.

The course, called Indigenous Canada, is the creation of experts from the Faculty of Native Studies, including assistant professor Tracy Bear.

"Knowledge keepers in and around Edmonton were accessed for their experience," she said. "We realized native knowledge wasn't confined to Métis, Cree, Blackfoot and

Plains, so we worked outside of our comfort zone."

"Every single module starts with an Indigenous perspective."

Those first-person perspectives then allow each lesson to expand and explore issues like residential schools and their impact, she said.

Bear said video-based online courses would likely be many students' first introduction to the First Nations of Turtle

Island.

"If we are talking existentially, this is 150 years in the making, but practically it's been developed within the last two years," Bear said.

The course is designed to be completed over 12 weeks. University students can take it for university credit.

It joins other massively successful MOOCs produced by the University of Alberta, like Dino 101 and Mountains 101.

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Heritage homes may get protection

URBAN PLANNING

City plan may prevent demolition by builders

Jeremy Simes
Metro | Edmonton

Edmonton heritage homes awaiting official designation may get extra protection if the city approves a new plan to help ward off demolition.

Officials provided recommendations at the urban planning committee Wednesday to develop a "special area zoning" plan, to ensure new homes are compatible with the heritage character of some streets.

It would also mean lots couldn't be split.

"Subdivision will result in further heritage losses and the city will be the poorer for it," said Barbara Finlay, a heritage advocate with the Old Glenora

Conservation Association.

Currently, homes listed on the city's heritage inventory can be demolished when builders come in to construct new homes in their place.

Leigh Matheson, also with the Old Glenora Conservation Association, said preserving heritage properties is about striking a balance, pointing to developments like the Brewery District.

"We should strive to protect our cultural neighbourhoods," she said. "Historical buildings are important because without them, we erase the past and the people who came before us."

But changes to the zoning policy won't actually prevent the demolition of a property, according to staff.

Instead, it would make demolition "less inviting" because builders would have to design homes aligned with a neighbourhood's character.

"That's something we could be open for business on. It would be another tool in the tool box," said Peter Ohm, head of city planning. "We want to have a

"We should strive to protect our cultural neighbourhoods."
Leigh Matheson

process that requires the community to participate."

The city could force buildings to be designated as historical residences — protected from demolition — but that would require Edmonton to pay a "substantial cost" to homeowners.

"There is no silver bullet, all these options are the best we can do right now," Ohm said.

Mayor Don Iveson said the city wants to preserve a heritage feel in neighbourhoods where the vibe is prominent.

"I think the next step is special areas of zoning where it makes sense," he said.

The city will return later this year to report back on how Edmonton could develop the zoning policy.



Leigh Matheson is an advocate for preserving heritage homes.

KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

MILDRED LAKE

Oilsands fire caused by oil leak

A fire that broke out at a Syncrude oilsands site in northern Alberta was the result of a supply line that broke and leaked light oil, a company spokesman said Wednesday.

Crews were allowing the blaze at the Mildred Lake oilsands upgrader to burn itself off of flammable chemicals, 24 hours after it erupted on Tuesday afternoon, because that's the safest way to dispose of the residual material, Will Gibson said.

Most of Syncrude's workforce has returned to the oilsands mining complex and the upgrader is still operating, he said.

Syncrude staff, the Alberta Energy Regulator and the province's Occupational Health and Safety division are investigating.

One worker was injured and taken to hospital in nearby Fort McMurray in serious but stable condition on Tuesday. The worker remained in hospital Wednesday, Gibson said.

The incident raises questions about Syncrude's operational reliability after it posted some of the best results in its 40-year history last year.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Educating through dance

CULTURE

Caribbean music drives new fitness classes



**Pushpa
Balgobin**

For Metro | Edmonton

Growing up in one of the few black families in Morinville, south of Edmonton, Cherelle George says it was her parents' strong sense of Trinidadian identity that made her fall in love with music and dance.

In particular, she grew up with soca, the music known for its loud and fast drumbeats that emerged in the Caribbean in the 1970s.

Now, she's blending it with fitness, and working spread it across Edmonton.

"I'm a dancer and a teacher and I'm trying to educate people through movement how inclusive the (Caribbean) islands are," George told Metro.



Cherelle George is the founder of SocaFit in Edmonton. KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

George is the founder of SocaFIT, a Caribbean-inspired fitness program that uses cardio and body weights.

For the last four years she's taught her classes at Marr-Mac

Dance and Theatre, and has been a guest dance instructor. There are also soca influenced dance classes at Desert Rose Dance Studio.

George's classes tap into

what she said is the growing popularity for Caribbean dance culture.

"When Ed Sheeran is singing on a dancehall beat, you know the demand is there for

Caribbean music and movement," she said.

She said social media has highlighted the popularity of Caribbean carnivals, fuelling demand for music and dance classes based on soca music. She added there's always an increase in interest following Edmonton's annual three-day Cariwest festival held in August.

"It's popular now. More mainstream," George said.

As a first generation Canadian with Trinidadian roots, she said it's also an important link to her history.

"I was putting all this energy in other forms of dance and everything else and there was disconnect to my culture," she said.

When her Trinidadian friends started to have kids it became clear there weren't many classes and or activities being offered in the city that showcased Caribbean culture, she said.

As a result, she's recently added a SocaFIT kids class.

"I want this to keep growing," she said. "I want soca in schools."

MOVIE SHOOTING Shunned film goes to B.C.

A movie starring Liam Neeson that was denied permission to film in Alberta's mountain national parks is now on location in British Columbia.

Mark Voyce, unit manager for the film Hard Powder, said staff are looking for extras for several days of filming in Fernie and Cranbrook.

Hard Powder had originally applied to Parks Canada for permits to film in several parts of the Rocky Mountain national parks in Alberta, including Banff, the Lake Louise townsite and ski hill, and the Columbia Icefields.

Weeks before the crew was scheduled to begin filming, Parks Canada turned them down. A letter from the agency listed eight deficiencies in their application.

Parks Canada officials later acknowledged the film's plot was a concern. It said concerns over the fact the gang leader in the movie was indigenous was "an important factor in the agency's final decision."

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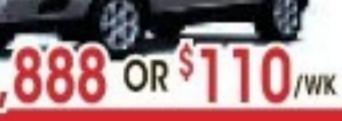
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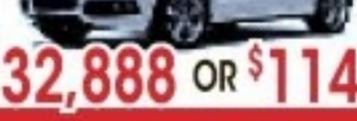
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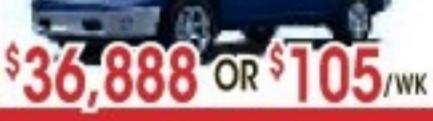
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One Canadian, three Russians

LEGAL

Young man allegedly paid to access hacked accounts

A 22-year-old Kazakh-Canadian man with expensive taste is facing charges of identity theft and conspiracy to commit computer fraud in connection with one of the biggest data breaches ever — the theft of 500 million Yahoo user accounts in early 2014.

Karim Baratov, a dual national of Kazakhstan and Canada, was arrested on Tuesday morning at his home in Ancaster, Ont. by Toronto Police and handed over to the RCMP, according to police spokesperson Mark Pugash.

Baratov is accused of being paid by two Russian spies to break into the email accounts of targeted individuals, according to a release from the U.S. Department of Justice.

The two members of the Russian intelligence agency FSB, Dmitry Dokuchaev, 33, and Igor Sushchin, 43, and Russian hacker Aleksey Belan, 29, who was on the

FBI's most wanted cyber criminals list and has been previously indicted twice for computer fraud, are facing more serious charges of criminal espionage, computer hacking and conspiracy-related offences after being indicted along with Baratov by a grand jury in northern California at the end of February.

The stolen information from the Yahoo hack was used to break into the email accounts of Russian journalists, U.S. and Russian government officials and employees in private-sector companies, according to the Justice Department release. Belan allegedly used the access to the 500 million email accounts for "personal financial gain."

Baratov's alleged involvement in the hacking conspiracy between January 2014 and December 2016 is detailed in an indictment filed with a San Francisco court. None of the charges have been proven in court.

Carmelo Truscello, who answered the phone at the office of Baratov's lawyer Amadeo DiCarlo, said that the case is only at its initial stage and that the allegations are unproven.

When a target of interest had



Karim Baratov, a Canadian man of Kazakh origins, has been arrested as one of four suspects in a hack of Yahoo emails. INSTAGRAM

an email account other than a Yahoo one, Dokuchaev and Sushchin would assign Baratov to gain access to it, according to the indictment.

Among the targeted individuals were the former Minister of De-

velopment of a country bordering Russia and his wife, the assistant to the Deputy Chairman of the Russian Federation, employees of a major Russian cybersecurity firm, Russian officials including one who worked in the bureau

that investigates cybercrime, the CEO of a metals mining company in a country bordering Russia, prominent bankers in countries bordering Russia and an International Monetary Fund official.

Baratov was allegedly paid to ob-



tain unauthorized access to more than 80 email accounts, including 50 Google accounts. He generally charged about \$100 (USD) per account and was paid at least \$1,000 in "money and other things of value" between April 2015 and

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A lavish lifestyle

In the photo, Karim Baratov leans against his sleek black Mercedes, parked next to his vanity-plate Aston Martin in the driveway of his Ancaster home.

Social media entries that appear to have been posted by Baratov portray the life of a wealthy young man with money to burn on luxury cars, arm-length tattoos and performance-enhancing workout supplements. Classmates recalled that Baratov began driving flashy cars and wearing expensive clothes in high school.

"He had the biggest amount of disposable income that I'd ever seen for a person that age," said Jake Hagen, who went to school with Baratov in Grade 7. "He bought his friends everything (like) clothes, and he'd take them all out to dinner ... He was a guy who very much understood that he was very well off and that people hung out with him because he had money."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



2016, according to the indictment. If he is convicted, prosecutors will seek a forfeiture order for Baratov's PayPal account and the fancy his — an Aston Martin DBS with the licence plate "MR KARIM" and a Mercedes Benz.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

HEALTH

Mortality rate lower among immigrants

Immigrants are 60 per cent less likely to die during a given time period than native-born Canadians and long-term residents, says a study that examines mortality rates based on immigration and socioeconomic status.

According to the joint study by the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences and the University of Toronto, immigrants had a much lower death rate than non-immigrants, even if they happen to live in the most deprived areas in the province.

The mortality rate, or death rate, is a measure of the number of deaths in the population, typically indicated in units of deaths per 1,000 people over a specific time frame. Immigrants' lower mortality rate translated into 42,700 fewer deaths overall and 18,400 fewer premature deaths during the study period from 2002 to 2012, the study said.

"We were surprised by the magnitude of the difference. It's big and substantial," said UofT epidemiologist Laura Rosella, the lead author of the research paper.

Based on population and demographic databases, as well as census results and immigration records, the study examined

Immigrants have lower mortality in everywhere we look at.

Laura Rosella

the mortality rates across the socioeconomic spectrum among immigrants, native-born Canadians and long-term residents who came here before 1985.

There were 934,765 deaths registered in Ontario during the study period, including 19,501 deaths among female immigrants and 20,514 deaths among male immigrants.

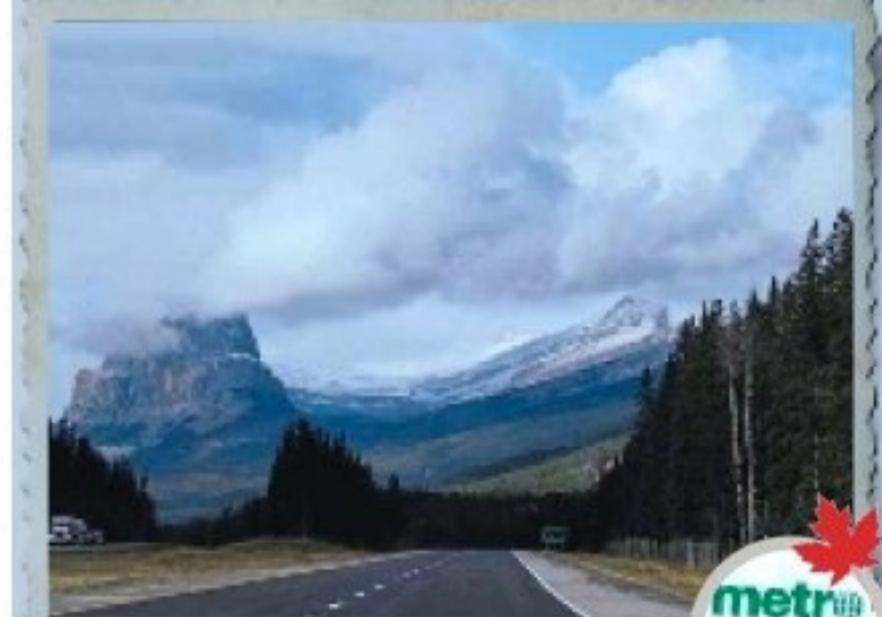
"Immigrants have lower mortality in everywhere we look at. Even when they are in lower socioeconomic status, they are still healthier," Rosella said. She attributed this partially to what's known as the "healthy immigrant effect," a trend where newcomers to Canada are healthier than the Canadian population, though over time, their health as well as that of their children declines.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

150 WAYS of looking at Canada

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Dutch reject far-right party

VOTE

PM Mark Rutte beat anti-Islam leader Geert Wilders

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte on Wednesday claimed a dominating parliamentary election victory over anti-Islam lawmaker Geert Wilders, who failed the year's first litmus test for populism in Europe.

The Netherlands' main exit poll suggested Rutte's party won 31 seats in the 150-member legislature, 12 more than Wilders' party, which shared second place with two other parties.

Following Britain's vote to leave the European Union and Donald Trump's election as U.S. president, "the Netherlands said, 'Whoa! Stop!' to the wrong kind of populism," said Rutte, who is now poised for a third term as prime minister.

"We want to stick to the course we have — safe and stable and prosperous," he



People wait in line to vote in the Dutch general elections in The Hague on Thursday. GETTY IMAGES

added.

Wilders had insisted that whatever the result of the election, the kind of populist politics he and others in Europe represent aren't going away.

"Rutte has not seen the back of me!" Wilders said in a Twitter message after the exit poll results had sunk in.

Both France and Germany have elections this year in which far-right candidates and parties are hoping to make an impact.

"Wilders could not win the election," German socialist leader Martin Schulz tweeted. "I am relieved, but we need to continue to fight for an open and Free Europe."

Rutte, who for much of the campaign appeared to be racing to keep pace with Wilders, may have profited from the hard line he drew in a diplomatic standoff with Turkey over the past week.

The fight erupted over the Netherlands' refusal to let two Turkish government ministers

address rallies in Rotterdam about a referendum that could give Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan more powers. It gave Rutte an opportunity to refuse to bow to foreign pressure, a stance with widespread backing in the nation.

Under brilliant skies, the Dutch went to vote in huge numbers, with turnout estimated to have reached at 82 per cent.

In a subplot of the elections, the Ipsos exit poll had the Green Left party registering a historic victory, turning it into the largest party on the left wing of Dutch politics for the first time.

The Greens leapt from four seats to 16 in parliament after a strong campaign by charismatic leader Jesse Klaver, who invites comparisons to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, according to the exit poll.

"This is a fantastic result for us, a historic victory," Green Left chairwoman Marjolein Meijer said. It remains to be seen if the 30-year-old Klaver will take his party into the next ruling coalition. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Federal judge in Hawaii puts Trump's Muslim ban on hold

Hours before it was to take effect, President Donald Trump's revised travel ban was put on hold Wednesday by a federal judge in Hawaii who questioned whether the administration was motivated by national security concerns.

U.S. District Judge Derrick Watson also said Hawaii would suffer financially if the executive order blocked the flow of students and

tourists to the state, and he concluded that Hawaii was likely to succeed on a claim that the ban violates First Amendment protections against religious discrimination.

"The illogic of the government's contentions is palpable," Watson wrote. "The notion that one can demonstrate animus toward any group of people only by targeting all of them at once

is fundamentally flawed."

Trump called the ruling an example of "unprecedented judicial overreach" and said his administration would appeal it to the U.S. Supreme Court.

"We're going to win. We're go-

ing to keep our citizens safe," the president said at a rally in Nashville. "The law is clear. The need for my executive order is clear."

The judge issued his 43-page ruling less than two hours after hearing Hawaii's request for a

temporary restraining order to stop the ban from being put into practice.

The ruling came as opponents renewed their legal challenges across the country, asking judges in three states to block the executive order that targets people from six predominantly Muslim countries. Watson made it clear that his decision applied nationwide. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ELECTIONS

Dutch vote is only the first step

The Dutch vote is likely to resonate across borders, even though local campaign issues differ. Here's a look at Europe's upcoming electoral battlegrounds:

FRANCE

French far-right leader Marine Le Pen has set the tone for the campaign for France's election with her anti-immigrant and anti-globalization program.

Le Pen argues that Muslim immigration and economic globalization are destroying France's identity, and polls suggest she could advance to the second round of France's election, set for April 23 and May 7.

GERMANY

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, seen abroad as a bulwark of tolerance, is seeking re-election in September.

Committed to European unity, Merkel's conservatives face a challenge from the nationalist Alternative for Germany party. But the party, known as AfD, has lost lustre amid infighting and other scandals.

Merkel's biggest threat is from the resurgent centre-left Social Democrats under former European Parliament chief Martin Schulz.

ITALY

Italy is facing a national parliamentary election in 2018 unless anti-establishment parties succeed in getting earlier polling, after pro-EU Premier Matteo Renzi resigned following the failure of a reforms referendum in December. With Italy's economy failing to rebound for years, opinion polls show the populist 5-Star Movement is consolidating gains. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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CHANTAL HÉBERT ON ALBERTA'S ABSENCE



For more than 20 years, a politician from Alberta has held the leading position on one side or the other in the House of Commons. That unbroken spell will come to a halt when the federal Conservatives pick a permanent successor to Stephen Harper next May.

The conspicuous absence of an Alberta candidate in the top-tier of the crowded federal leadership field is one of the striking features of the ongoing battle for the Conservative crown.

Among the 14 candidates only Deepak Obhrai hails from the province. The longest-serving MP in Parliament is not expected to make it out of the lower tier of the pack on the Conservatives' preferential ballot.

The province's absence is conspicuous because while the party, under Harper, extended its wings in Central Canada, much of the intellectual energy that has fuelled the conservative movement over the past two decades has come from the West and in particular from Alberta.

In different ways, Ralph Klein, Preston Manning and Harper himself all had a hand at changing some of the terms of the national conversation.

If only for that reason, it is as hard to fathom a federal Conservative leadership contest that does not feature a strong Alberta contender as it is to imagine a Liberal line-up that did not boast at least one leading aspirant from Quebec.

Yet in this campaign, Saskatchewan's Andrew Scheer is the only candidate that can be described as having a serious shot

The West fuelled the national conservative movement for decades. But no Albertans have a shot at federal leadership, so Tories are putting their hopes in the provinces.



Deepak Obhrai is the lone Albertan in the pack of 14 Conservative Party leadership candidates. THE CANADIAN PRESS

at keeping the federal leadership torch in Western Canadian hands.

But to travel to Alberta as the campaign for Harper's succession enters the last stretch is also to be reminded that the battle between some of the former prime minister's presumptive heirs for the moral leadership of the Canadian right is not limited to the federal front.

Indeed, in Alberta as in Ontario, the federal front may be a secondary one.

On Saturday, Alberta's Progressive Conservatives will select a permanent replacement for the late Jim Prentice. By all accounts the result is a foregone conclusion. Former immigration minister Jason Kenney's widely expected leadership victory is only the first step on the path to reconciling the province's feuding conservative clans.

Next on the agenda is the

negotiation of a mutually agreeable arrangement between the Wildrose party and the Tories and another leadership round between their respective leaders.

Kenney would like to replicate Harper's winning federal formula and take the helm of a reunited provincial party. Wildrose leader Brian Jean whose party is the official opposition in Edmonton is not inclined to hand the provincial reins to his former federal colleague without a fight.

A Mainstreet poll published this week reported that there would be room in that future contest for a compromise candidate liable to squeeze past Kenney and Jean.

On that score, a name that keeps coming up is that of Rona Ambrose. She will relinquish her position as interim leader once a permanent successor to Harper is chosen.

Conservative insiders say they would not be surprised if she left the federal arena before the House reopens next fall.

As official opposition leader since the last election, Ambrose has had a good run. If she decided to run provincially, she would not lack for support. Whether she wants to take on Kenney and Jean is anybody's guess at this juncture. It is also not a given that she would win.

But there is no doubt that the leadership of a united Alberta conservative party looks like a more attractive prize than Harper's succession.

With premier Rachel Notley's New Democrats languishing in third place in voting intentions, the provincial Conservatives can see a path back to power in Edmonton sooner rather than later.

The same is not true of their federal cousins. Their leadership campaign has been plagued by doubts as to whether any of the candidates has a shot at stopping Justin Trudeau from securing a second mandate or even at hanging on to the party's current seats.

By the time he left office, Harper towered over Canada's Conservative movement. But with conservatives in power in Manitoba and Saskatchewan and the conservative opposition leading in the polls in Ontario and Alberta, whoever succeeds the former prime minister will have to earn his or her moral authority on the Canadian right the hard way.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer. Her column appears in Metro every Thursday.

Women have enough to do, we can't fix wage inequality alone, too



Vicky Mochama
Metro

If you're a young woman or a woman of colour, you're apparently never supposed to ask about money for work you do.

The Winnipeg-based food delivery company Skip the Dishes got into trouble when a prospective employee shared emails showing the company had cancelled her second interview after she asked about pay and benefits. The interviewee, Taylor Byrnes, actually apologized at the same time she asked, saying, "Sorry, I just thought I should ask now." (The company has since apologized and offered Byrnes the second interview.)

It's not just entry-level office jobs that don't want to pay women for their labour.

The Next Web, a tech conference held in Amsterdam this year, sent out offers for speakers including Luvvie Ajayi, a New York Times best-selling author whose book is being turned into a TV show by Shonda "I Own Primetime TV" Rhimes. Ajayi's speaking agent was told that the conference, which nets millions in sponsorships, didn't have a budget for speakers.

If she could just bounce over to Amsterdam for free, that'd be great. Ajayi turned them down.

Being a working woman is exhausting for many reasons: tights are a scam invented by Big Pantyhose, having to hold back screams when men say your own ideas back to you and well, that whole sexual harassment thing.

But one of the most ex-

hausting things, aside from the actual work itself, is knowing that money you've earned is being kept from you.

In Byrnes' case, the company initially said that even asking about money "at such an early stage" showed that her "priorities are not in sync with those of SkipTheDishes."

In the Lean In school feminism, women are told that they're not asking for enough money (we're not), and that there's some magical combination of ways to ask successfully. The reality is that by attrition and by opacity, women are not being compensated for their labour.

We see this most starkly in industries that are most often dominated by women like nursing, caregiving, and retail. Women also make up a majority of part-time and low-income work.

It should not just be on women to do the asking, but also on companies to offer. Income transparency is one way to put a little more equity into the workforce. Three Nordic countries — Norway, Sweden and Finland — all have a version of income transparency that allows citizens to see each other's tax records. You want to know what your colleague makes? Google it, then negotiate.

Along with other public policy fixes such as non-transferable paid paternity leave (dads must pay their dues in the diaper mines), and gender quotas in public institutions, women in the Nordic countries are much less likely to be shortchanged for their work.

The work that women do is invaluable, but that doesn't mean it's not worth paying for.

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SUSTAINABILITY WITH STYLE HOW TO LIVE A BIODEGRADABLE LIFE

We often lament about how nothing lasts anymore. But for a new wave of biodegradable home-related items, breaking down is a good thing. "There is a pull towards being more sustainable from designers and artists, which is now gaining momentum and becoming more fashionable," says designer Spencer Jenkins, who makes furniture and sculptures that are woven, carved or steamed from wood and willow. "This needs to happen if the world as a whole is to survive." We rounded up stylish products that can be enjoyed guilt-free. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



1 Wrap and wash guilt-free

Trust the Swedes to design a **dishcloth that is not only stylish, but also 100 per cent biodegradable**. According to Marie Kanwischer, owner of SwedeThings, the Swedish dishcloth is nothing new: "These have been a household staple for over 60 years back home." Made of cellulose and cotton, the cloths are machine washable. \$7, Swedethings.ca. Toni Desrosiers is the queen bee behind Abeego, an all-natural **food wrap made of hemp and cotton fabric** that has been coated with a combination of beeswax, tree resin and jojoba oil. It can be used to wrap food or cover a bowl. \$15 to \$18, abeego.com.



2 Brush off your plastic worries with bamboo

That plastic toothbrush sitting in your bathroom is dirty, ending up in landfills, or even worse: washing up on beaches, according to toothbrush maker Brush with Bamboo. Have a clean conscience and opt for a plant-based, **bamboo toothbrush**. BPA-free, vegan, verified non-toxic and biodegradable. \$6 Ecoexistence.ca.



4 Sit back, relax on some flax

Christien Meindertsma's **flax chair** will soon be available in Canada, says a spokesperson for Label-Breed. The chair is made from flax fibres combined with PLA (polylactic acid made from sugarcane and corn starch). \$681, thomaseyck.com.



4 Weaving willow wonders

U.K. artist Spencer Jenkins creates modern **furniture and sculptures with traditional materials such as willow**. His creations range from bespoke furniture, wall and garden sculptures to the massive willow arches he created as lead artist to celebrate the Queen's 60th Jubilee Celebrations in 2012. You can commission your own willow creation from Jenkins, who is happy to ship across the pond. Norfolk Pebble chair, \$9,799; Wall sculptures, \$816 to \$1143, spencerjenkins.co.uk.

5 Throwing shade at waste

Maria Fiter of Crea-re designs eco-friendly lighting with papier-mâché to create **paper lamps** using old newspapers. Fiter's Pluto lamp was inspired by the Solar System. Each lamp is handmade. \$334, ekohunters.com.



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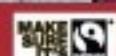
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Why she toned down the torture

INTERVIEW

Chevy Stevens faced criticism for writing violent scenes

Sue Carter
For Metro Canada

Chevy Stevens is hiding in her washroom. If this was a scene from one of her novels, she might be trying to escape a kidnapper, but, in reality, this is the only place Stevens can find a few minutes of quiet for this interview, away from her inquisitive four-year-old daughter.

Being a mother has changed not only Stevens' life, but her approach to writing. Now that the Vancouver Island author has a kid, she's more aware of what she puts down on paper.

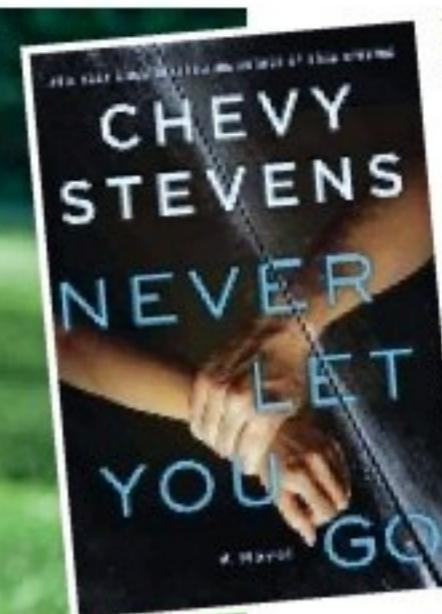
"I don't write about a child being hurt now, that's for sure," she says. "I have a phobia that if I wrote something about a child and something happened in my real life, I would be terrified that I brought it. I know — as if I'm godlike, or have that power — but this is a secret hidden fear and superstition."

Her latest, *Never Let You Go*, follows Lindsey Nash, a young mom who escapes in the dead of night from her abusive husband, Andrew. Eleven years later with her life happily re-established, she discovers that Andrew is out of prison.

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Never Let You Go is about domestic abuse, but Chevy Stevens says it's more suspenseful and less violent than her previous work.

and although legally he must stay away from her and her now-teenage daughter Sophie, Lindsey can't shake the chilling sense she's being

watched. The story switches perspectives between Lindsey's growing fears and Sophie's conflicted desire to know her father, with a giant twister of an ending.

Never Let You Go is a departure from Stevens' previous five books, all of which are set on Vancouver Island.

For one, there is much less graphic physical violence, something Stevens has never

shied away from since her 2010 debut, *Still Missing*, about a real-estate agent who is tortured in a remote cabin.

Written while Stevens was working as a realtor herself — her books often emerge out of her own fears — she sold her own home so she could focus on writing full-time. The gamble paid off: the manuscript landed Stevens an agent, a three-book publishing deal, and turned her into an international bestselling breakout star.

While Stevens' thrillers have been praised for their gripping,

no-apologies storytelling and strong female protagonists, she has occasionally faced criticism over the violence inflicted on them by male characters.

"I think I was in a darker place in my own life. I just didn't want to go there anymore," she says. "I wanted to experiment with how to make something really suspenseful. I wanted to show how someone can keep you constantly scared, even if they're not doing something directly to you. How do I write a really scary book that is about physical violence, but without it being about women

being abducted or murdered, or serial killers, or all those typical things?"

Although *Never Let You Go* is not autobiographical, Stevens admits she was influenced subconsciously by memories of her father, who died when she was 22. Like Andrew, Stevens' dad was an alcoholic, who became violent when drinking.

"He would smash or break things, and he had a lot of problems with anger. But my dad was a great guy," she says. "It's so hard to explain, even in your own mind, I still feel protective when I talk about him sometimes."

In hindsight, Stevens also directly relates to a few scenes between Sophie and Andrew, but says the parallels were unintentional.

"This isn't an agenda book," she says adamantly. "I didn't write it thinking, 'I'm going to sit down and process all these feelings about my father,' but sometimes I would step outside myself and think, 'Holy crap, I've totally been there.'"

However, Stevens did imagine while writing that some day she hopes to enjoy a tight-knit relationship with her offspring, like the one between Lindsey and Sophie.

"It was my way of projecting onto the future," she says. "It is a love story, but it's a mother-daughter love story."

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.


GRAPHIC NOVEL

Tough messages for all races

Fire!! The Zora Neale Hurston Story

By: Peter Bagge

Publisher: Drawn and Quarterly

\$23.95; 104 pages

Mike Donachie
Metro | Canada

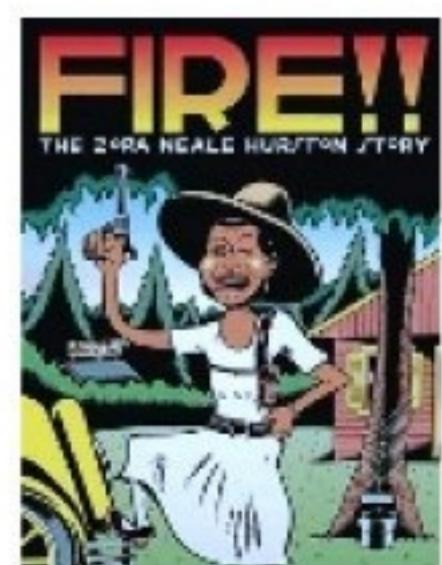
The graphic novel biographies just keep on coming, and this one is unusual.

Peter Bagge, previously best-known for underground-style cartoon work, is telling stories of remarkable lives, and his new book focuses on novelist and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston.

Her story is certainly re-

markable. Refusing to fall into line with early 20th century expectations of how an African American woman should behave, Hurston rebelled in a big way. One of eight children in a Baptist family in Alabama, she battled to escape low-paid jobs and get an education, becoming the only black student at Barnard College, and then a career as a writer among New York's best.

But this book is mostly about Hurston as a character. Her determination and fierce nature are shown boldly, and racial issues, unsurprisingly, are to the fore. "White liberalism is another form of racism," Hurston declares. "They presume I need their help to get ahead and that I 'owe' them



in return."

Bagge's loose, cartoony style softens the blow a little, but there are some complicated issues and tough messages for people of all races here.

A heroic stoner with burning will

INTERVIEW

Eden Robinson unveils a most unlikely hero in new novel

A weed cookie-dealing stoner teen may not seem like your typical hero, but the fictional high school burnout proves he's got plenty of heart in Eden Robinson's *Son of a Trickster*.

The coming of age novel is the first in a decade for the acclaimed writer, who grew up in Haisla territory near Kitamaat Village, B.C. Her last fiction title, *Blood Sports*, was published in 2006.

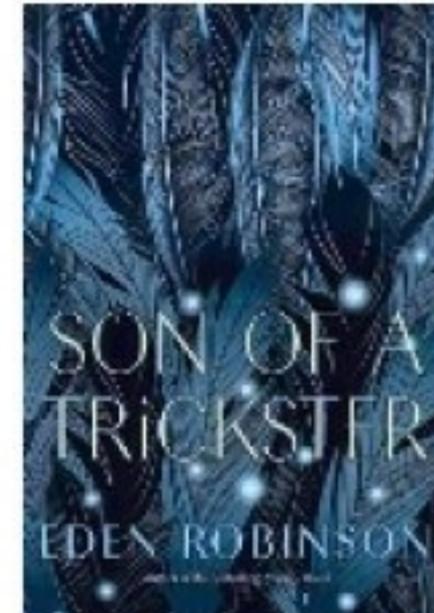
Son of a Trickster offers an offbeat mix of humour and heartbreak in what Robinson describes as a "screwball gothic."

The story centres on 16-year-old Jared, who is shouldering burdens most kids his age couldn't fathom.

After his parents divorce, his mom, Maggie, is struggling to pay the mortgage and keeping company with a drug-dealing boyfriend. There's also the matter of tending to his ailing dad, Phil, and helping his stepsister, Destiny, with her little one.

While trying to support his family, Jared also makes time to help his elderly neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Jaks, who cared for him while his mother was in anger management.

"(With) the earliest versions of him, what always came through was his sense of wanting to belong to a family, and creating families when he didn't have any, and not wanting to let go of any of his connections. So he would do a lot of keep them," said Robinson, whose debut novel Mon-



key Beach was shortlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize and the Governor General's Literary Award.

"Another part of the origin of the novel was when you're living in the small company towns you see how precarious employment can be," she added. "When everyone around you loses their job, and it's not just your family, it's your community that's kind of being shattered when a big company closes."

"I just wanted to explore that in fiction because I don't think it's a story that's told a lot; and if it is told, it's told in passing, it's not given as much weight."

Jared maintains a loving relationship with his paternal grandmother, Nana Sophia. He receives a far chillier reception from his maternal grandmother, Anita Moody, who brands him a

Wee'git, or "trickster."

While skeptical of the label, he starts to think twice when ravens start speaking to him, and he encounters elements in the supernatural world even when he's not under the influence.

Robinson's mother is Heiltsuk, but the indigenous author grew up in her Haisla dad's community where it was common for grownups to gather around the kitchen table sharing Wee'git stories.

"Wee'git in our culture is a character that teaches you about protocol, about the way we behave, about what we do, and how we relate to people. But he teaches you that by breaking all the rules," Robinson said, erupting into her signature, hearty laugh.

"He's a very transgressive character. So his stories are always funny, crazy, and usually quite earthy."

Son of a Trickster is the first in a planned trilogy from Robinson. By the conclusion of the first novel, there appear to be signs that Jared's frayed familial bonds — particularly with his frosty grandmother — could be on the mend.

"The process for forgiving yourself, forgiving other people is challenging, and he's willing to do that and a lot of other people aren't. So, I thought I would explore that in fiction and see where everything went."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

He's a very transgressive character. So his stories are always funny, crazy, earthy.

Eden Robinson



JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

Good girls who deserved better

THE SHOW: *Good Girls Revolt*, Season 1, Episode 1 (Amazon Prime)

THE MOMENT: Nora quits

At *News of the Week* magazine in 1969, young men are writers, and young women are researchers, making them look good. But new researcher Nora Ephron (Grace Gummer) wrote a story, and wants a byline.

"That's not the way we do things here," growls editor Wick McFadden (Jim Belushi).

"Your rules are dumb," Nora says. "If copy's good, it's good." Now the whole room is listening.

"Young lady, you might not want to make waves, lest we

have doubts about our decision to hire you," Wick says. "Back to work, dear."

"This is ridiculous," Nora says. "I quit."

"Your name is all you have in journalism. So good luck, Nora Ephron," Wick says. He turns to another researcher. "Get me a cup of coffee, willya?"

This subject is dear to my heart. As a newbie journalist in New York 15 years later, I stood on the shoulders of these women, who risked everything to sue their employers for equal opportunity. So I wanted to love this show. But it's so on the nose that watching it practically gives you a bloody nose from being

repeatedly punched on the nose. Every scene is the same: the women do bold things, the men squash them.

And the dialog! "I'm young. I want to tiptoe through the tulips. I feel like you're putting me in a box," says insurrection leader Patti (Genevieve Angelilson, perfectly cast) to her writer boyfriend.

"You're not a reporter, you're a researcher," he replies. "And we had a date." These good girls deserve better.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

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CULTURE

Vogue Arabia tries to find a local voice

Vogue launched its newest international edition this month, targeting a niche audience in the Middle East that is fashion conscious, style-driven and wealthy. If its debut is anything to go by, the magazine promises to be bold, representative and deferential.

The 22nd international edition of Vogue featured on its cover American supermodel Gigi Hadid, whose father is Palestinian, wearing an embellished, mesh veil covering half her face. With one eye peering out from beneath the veil, the magazine's cover words aimed readers directly at its mission: "Reorienting perceptions."

At the helm of Vogue's nascent project is Deena Aljuhani Abdalaziz; a fashion-forward mother of three and Saudi royal who describes herself as "ambitious".

"I don't want Vogue Arabia to just be another regional magazine. I definitely want it to be a global one as well, especially in this political climate. I think it's very important," she said.

Through its range of features, the magazine attempts to cater to a wide and diverse audience of Arab women, whose varying takes on personal style and modesty cannot be defined by one trope or fashion statement.

While not intentionally provocative, there are images of women in backless gowns and skirts that end above the knee. There are also artful shots of women in headscarves, though not necessarily worn in the parameters of the Islamic hijab.

In Hadid's cover shot, for example, the veil reveals a hint of bronzed shoulder.

"We aren't trying to make a giant political statement but we do think that we can help contribute to conversation" said Shashi Menon, founder of Nervora, which published Vogue Arabia in partnership with Conde Nast.

"We want to be — delicate is the wrong word, but we want to be cognizant on how we are speaking to and with women from this region and that means being understanding," he said.

Vogue Arabia's strongest foothold is — as its name suggests — in the oil-rich countries of the Arabian Peninsula, where mod-



Gigi Hadid graces the first cover of Vogue Arabia. VOGUE

ern malls and a growing art scene are part of a wider push to get in on the multi-billion-dollar-a-year global fashion industry, which is currently dominated by the U.S., Europe and Japan.

Vogue Arabia's target audience is well-travelled and has long had access to fashion magazines, both local and international, including of course American Vogue.

Vogue Arabia launched digitally first last fall, but its print edition went out this month with 35,000 copies distributed across the major cities of the Gulf, as well as in Cairo, Beirut and select salons and hotels in North Africa. It was not, however, in newsstands in conservative Saudi Arabia.

Menon says the expectation isn't that Vogue Arabia will somehow replace American Vogue or Vogue Paris, but that it will provide for the first time an edition that directly speaks to a Middle Eastern audience in a local voice. It's also the first Vogue edition for an entire region, rather than for a single country.

Inside its glossy pages, Vogue Arabia capitalizes on the breadth of culture and character of the Middle East's 22 Arabic-speaking countries. For its March issue, that meant features on an arts initiative in the Saudi coastal city of Jeddah, an interview with the Egyptian sisters behind the purse brand Okhtein and a high-glamour shoot in Paris by Sudanese stylist Azza Yousif.

Bold colours are prominent throughout the layout, not just on the clothes, but in the makeup and accessories too. Advertisers include powerhouses like Dior and Cartier. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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A not so clear-cut trend

FASHION

Why a little less denim is causing a whole lot of debate



Nichole Jankowski
For Metro | Toronto

They are the jeans that launched a thousand tweets.

Described as "clear panel mom jeans" on Topshop's website, these pants are fast fashion at its best, or worst, depending on your outlook.

An amalgamation of trends — high-waisted, translucent, ripped, patched, cropped and stone washed — all colliding in a single item. They look like Topshop has replaced its designers with algorithms. But they're also a beautiful mashup of our times.

The "cool clear knee panel detail" are the perfect windows to show off your fishnet tights, which are currently being worn under jeans thanks to Kim Kardashian and the rest of the clan. They're also winter-weather appropriate ripped denim.

Sold under Topshop's Moto private label, they are being carried at Nordstrom in the States and Hudson's Bay in Canada.

Yesterday, they caught the attention of the Internet in a big way and has mainstream media asking "but why?" or whether these pants are a sign of the end times.

But here at Metro we're not interested in the reason, just your reaction.



HANDOUT

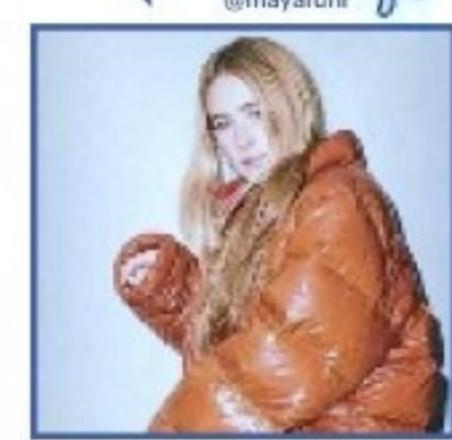
I live in a city where it rains constantly so I'm down for the knee windshield. And when they steam up you could squiggle messages onto them like a bathroom mirror. Leila Bani, Vancouver, stylist and art director

@leilareira



I'm all for mom jeans — they're definitely the most flattering fit for a woman with curves. But the knees are the most boring part of the leg. In my opinion, expose the butt or the crotch, they're much more worthy of attention. Maya Fuhr, Toronto, photographer

@mayaehr



ABOVE PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

THROUGH A GLASS LENS

Book looks at social trends

A book that examines the history of a longtime glass manufacturing company and the corresponding changes of an American city is the latest bestseller to explore economic and social trends in the U.S. through the lens of Ohio communities.

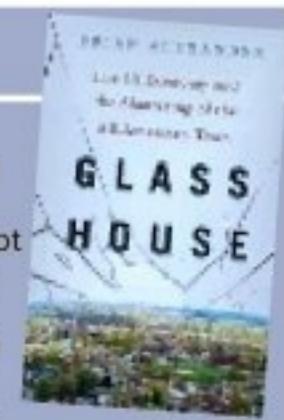
Glass House: The 1% Economy and the Shattering of the All-American Town focuses on Lancaster in central Ohio and the glass company most residents still refer to as Anchor Hocking.

Journalist author Brian Alexander, who grew up in the city, explores what hap-

pened after outside firms took over Anchor Hocking and chipped away at its local roots. The company's headquarters was closed in 1987 after Newell Corporation bought the company, and 300 office workers were fired.

"A core group of Lancaster's leadership class, and

their all-important spouses, were swept away, ripping a huge hole in the social fabric of the town," Alexander writes. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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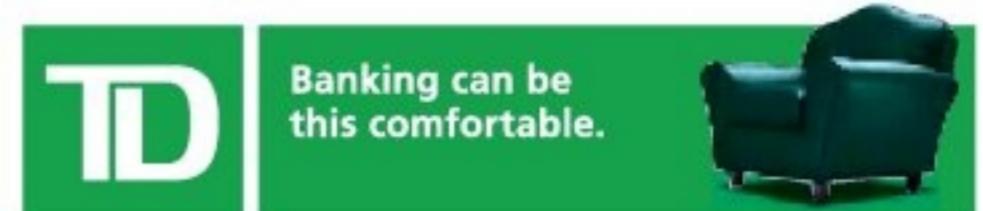
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VALOUR CONDOS

CONTRIBUTED

Project overview

The award-winning village at Griesbach boasts distinctive architecture, four lakes and a central park. The mix of single-family homes, duplexes and the apartment-style Valour condos appeal to buyers of all ages and stages — making for a vibrant neighbourhood mix. Nearby entertainment, dining, shops and services on 137 Ave. are the cherry on top.

Housing amenities

Units have open layouts, over-height ceilings, patios/balconies as well as laminate, ceramic tile and carpeting, wood cabinetry, stainless steel appliances and a breakfast bar. Low E2 oversized windows and designer lighting and colour packages add to the host of in-suite features. Buildings have access to underground heated parking.

Location and transit

Griesbach is part of the urban village along 137 Avenue near 97 Street, handy for commuters heading downtown and close to the Anthony Henday ring road and Yellowhead Trail with access to all city points. The condos are likewise close to Londonderry Mall and Northgate Centre's transit loop, with links to the city core.

In the neighbourhood

Residents can enjoy a 24-acre central park, a children's playground and K-9 school. Londonderry Mall, Northgate Centre, police and fire stations, Castledowns Recreation Centre and Royal Alexandra Hospital are minutes away. The neighbouring area has restaurants, a movie theatre, grocery stores and a slew of services. LUCY HAINES/FOR METRO



NEED TO KNOW

What: Valour Condos

Builder/Developer: Carrington Communities

Location: Griesbach, in Northwest Edmonton

Building: Two- and four-storey buildings

Sizes: From 800 to 1,200 square feet

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units in two floor plans

Pricing: From \$234,900

Status: Now selling

Occupancy: Immediate possessions available

Sales centre: 508 Griesbach Parade NW

Phone: (780) 760-2002

Website: carrington.ca

AROMA

Welcome spring into your home with stovetop potpourri

If you've had enough of winter and long for a warm-ish spring day when you can open up the windows and let some fresh air inside, you aren't alone.

Scented candles and room fresheners are popular ways to try to mask stale air. These products often contain ingredients that can be irritating for many people.

"Stovetop simmer pots are essentially an old-fashioned diffuser," says Natacha Rey, founder of Maison Apothecare, an all-natural products retailer

based in Oakville, Ont.

Rey has developed a line of home and personal care products that are naturally scented using pure essential oils. Rey's oils sell for \$25 a bottle — but it's also possible to make your own for a few dollars. It's as simple as throwing a few fresh ingredients into a pot on the stove.

We've been experimenting in the kitchen and have come up with three recipes to help make your home smell like spring using a stovetop pot-

pourri made from citrus fruits and herbs simmering in a pot of water.

The technique is easy: throw the ingredients into a pot, add enough water to cover them, bring to a boil, then turn down the heat and simmer away.

Lemon, rosemary, vanilla

The ingredients create a lemony, woodsy aroma. Hint: Vanilla extract gives a bolder scent than the pod.

- 3 slices of lemon (you could also opt for lemon peel)

- 2 sprigs of fresh rosemary
- A few drops of vanilla extract (you could also add a piece of a vanilla pod)

Grapefruit, lemon thyme, cardamom

This blend was inspired by a cocktail. Grapefruit is known to be uplifting, energizing and invigorating. As its name implies, lemon thyme also has a slightly citrus scent. Cardamom is aromatic and has a warming effect.

- 3 slices of lime (you could also opt for lime peel)
- 2 sprigs of fresh mint
- A four-inch (10 cm) piece of sliced lemongrass

- 2 sprigs of fresh lemon thyme
- 4 crushed cardamom pods (opt for 6 for a stronger scent)

Lime, mint, lemongrass

Lime and citrus make this combination like a mojito for your senses. Mint is known to have a cooling effect and the scent of lemongrass is calming.

- 3 slices of lime (you could also opt for lime peel)
- 2 sprigs of fresh mint
- A four-inch (10 cm) piece of sliced lemongrass



Banish stale air and food smells. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

METRO SPACES

Assisting home buyers a labour of love for Bikaw

For Suzie Bikaw, turning homeowners' questions and problems into answers and solutions is all in a day's work — and it's a labour of love.

"I like helping people; it's what I do every day and it's what makes my job satisfying," says Bikaw, home service coordinator for Shane Homes. "On a daily basis, if I've made someone happy I feel like I've done my job."

Working with a team of service technicians, a service manager and another coordinator, Bikaw deploys whatever resources are necessary to help buyers of Shane homes get the most out of their purchases.

Some of what she and her team deal with involves warranty work, repairs and mainten-

ance, including three-month and one-year inspections. But with 20 years of industry experience — 14 of them with Shane — Bikaw can often address problems with a few questions and an explanation rather than needing to send a technician out.

"When I can resolve someone's issue over the phone, that feels good." Sometimes all it takes is a reminder of how the heating system works, or some other operational aspect of the home.

"When we turn over a house, we do a customer orientation and let them know all the details. But they are, understandably, really excited and so sometimes they don't absorb it all," she says.



Suzie Bikaw, home service coordinator for Shane Homes. CONTRIBUTED

Bikaw deals with anywhere from around 20 to 60 customers in a typical day, and says on average at least 80 per cent of their issues can be resolved very quickly. "That's one of the things we pride ourselves in."

Born and raised in Trinidad, Bikaw came

to Calgary in 1991 to attend Mount Royal University on a scholarship. There she studied business management before entering the homebuilding industry, working first as a customer liaison then moving into her current role.

She has continued to develop her industry skills and knowledge by taking numerous courses from the Professional Home Builders Institute. But what she treasures most is the opportunity to connect with people by solving problems and putting their minds at ease.

"I like a positive outcome where a customer is happy. You create lasting relationships with them and it feels really good," she says. "I love everything about my job, I'm happy where I am and I love what I do."

Part of that includes working with a supportive team, and Bikaw couldn't be more enthusiastic about her colleagues at Shane Homes.

"There are so many people you build long-lasting friendships with at work. Everything evolves and the company has matured, but friends still endure."

-MILES DURRIE

GET INSPIRED FOR YOUR NEXT HOME RENOVATION

Home renovation season is slowly ramping up, and the energy in Edmonton is building.

Spring is the perfect time to jump on the home décor improvements you've been wanting to do for years — and there's no event like Edmonton's upcoming Home and Garden Show to get you inspired.

If you're going to the show, which runs from March 23-26, make sure to visit Touchtone Canada. The flooring company's booth will feature a huge sale on currently stocked products and new arrivals.

"During the show, all of our prices are discounted," says Baneet Singh, general manager and partner at Touchtone Canada. "We took part in Edmonton Renovation Show in February this year and it was a runaway success, so we are coming back with a bang in the Home and Garden Show."

The Touchtone booth draws crowds for a good reason. The company, which normally offers wholesale prices to regular consumers, is offering even deeper discounts on their huge range of flooring, including hardwood, luxury vinyl plank (LVP), laminate, tile and carpet.

If you can't make it to the show, you can still find amazing deals year-round at Touchtone Canada's 50,000-square-foot showroom,



ISTOCK

which offers the best prices on flooring in the city. Touchtone even beats quotes from flooring competitors by at least five per cent.

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DISCOVER SUSTAINABLE LIVING DOWNTOWN

Downtown Edmonton is undergoing an exciting transformation, making more Edmontonians want to live downtown.

Renovated and redeveloped areas are everywhere — the renovated Federal Building and surrounding plaza, the new Hyatt hotel, the new Edmonton Tower, the new Rogers Place arena and LRT station. The list goes on.

Now downtown residents can find new rental apartments that are just as forward-thinking.

The Mayfair on Jasper, a rental community at 109th Street & Jasper Avenue, offers modern luxury. Its 238 residential units over 10 storeys are now renting for spring occupancy. For a limited time, new renters can receive an incentive of up to \$1,000.

"The Mayfair on Jasper is a rental game changer downtown," says Matt Salucop, director of marketing for ProCura Real Estate Services, the developers behind The Mayfair on Jasper. "Its modern features and central location make it a world-class place to live in Edmonton's revitalized core."

The development doesn't just rely on its looks. Like many of the new buildings going up in the area, it has built-in environmental



CONTRIBUTED

sustainability. It incorporates eco-friendly features including solar panels and a co-generation energy system, which repurposes wasted heat from the production of electricity to help heat the building.

Every home is energy-efficient too, with features like triple-pane windows and EnergyStar appliances.

Downtown Edmonton is becoming a place where car ownership is optional. This

Living at The Mayfair

Visit the rental office and show suites at 10823 Jasper Ave. to see if living at the Mayfair on Jasper is for you.

Visit mayfaironjasper.ca for more information.

is very true at The Mayfair on Jasper, which is located next to Corona LRT Station. When residents do need a car, they can borrow one using the building's exclusive car-sharing program, coming later this year.

Walkability is a key part of living there. New retail tenants confirmed in the building include Freshii, Splash Poke and ZenQ. A premium coffee shop and full-service casual dining restaurant are set to open later this year.

Inside each home, The Mayfair on Jasper exudes modern luxury. Homes were built to a high standard, and residents will be able to enjoy high-end kitchen appliances, granite countertops, in-suite laundry and durable, attractive laminate flooring.

APPLY TODAY, REST EASY THIS SPRING

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Don't miss your opportunity to move into a brand new luxury apartment featuring premium finishes and innovative tenant conveniences. Contact a leasing agent to start your application to live in downtown Edmonton's most sought-after rental building and be settled into your new home in time for spring.

OFFERING AFFORDABLE LUXURY TOWNHOMES

Rarely will you find such incredible value in a new townhome as with the Altius line by StreetSide Developments.

This exciting concept is currently selling in seven different locations across Edmonton and Spruce Grove. Starting from the \$190's for the two-storey stacked townhomes and the \$290's for the three-storey townhomes, the expectation is for these maintenance-free town homes, each with an attached garage, to sell quickly.

Altius offers a diverse collection of 12 different floor plans. Each plan caters to distinct homeowner needs StreetSide Developments has identified in their long history of successful multifamily building.

"The inspiration for Altius was the Olympic Motto: *Citius — Altius — Fortius*," Sales & Marketing Manager Barb Lee points out, "Faster — Higher — Stronger. Altius takes advantage of square footage by offering spacious plans with conveniences that will really impact buyers' lifestyles."

StreetSide believed from the very beginning that in order for Altius to stand out

ALTIUS TAKES ADVANTAGE OF PLANS WITH CONVENIENCES THAT WILL REALLY IMPACT BUYERS' LIFESTYLES.

— Barb Lee

and be recognized for its incredible value and innovative design features, it absolutely had to offer the best value in the market.

Starting from just \$820 monthly and offering multiple one, two and three bedroom designs ranging from 720 square feet up to 1,502 square feet. Altius has certainly achieved the goal of affordability.

But simply being affordable was not enough. As the name implies, Altius wanted to aim higher. By including an attached single or double car garage and maintenance-free exteriors combined with amazing interior finishes like laminate and tile flooring, quartz countertops and six appliances; the bar was officially raised and exceptional value was achieved.



CONTRIBUTED

If you have been on the fence waiting for the perfect home at the perfect time this just might be the time for you to make a move to an Altius townhome. With plenty of special incentives currently available

that offer savings of up to \$15,000, you don't want to wait. Plan a visit to an Altius show home and discuss the great deals already available or visit altiustownhomes.com for more information.

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Canadians set sights on title with Ducks

MARCH MADNESS

Trio has helped Oregon earn third seed in Midwest Region

Before Senior Day tipped off last month at the University of Oregon, Ducks fans stood for O Canada.

The Canadian anthem played that day in support of two of the team's seniors — Dylan Ennis and Chris Boucher. Add in Pac 12 player of the year Dillon Brooks and the trio of Canadians have been the cornerstone this season of one of best teams in NCAA basketball.

"There's a lot of respect for it and you see it around the fans of the teams that have Canadians, they often embrace the Canadian aspect," said Ennis's dad Tony McIntyre, who was in the crowd at Matthew Knight Arena for Senior Day.

It's become a common storyline: Canadians playing key roles down south. And once again, a cast of talented Canadians will follow in the footsteps of the likes of Tristan Thompson, Cory Joseph, Andrew Wiggins and Jamal Murray into March Madness.

"I think it's great, great for basketball in Canada that's for sure," McIntyre said.

McIntyre and wife Suzette Ennis will be in Sacramento on Friday, when the Ducks open



Dylan Ennis, centre, and Dillon Brooks led the Oregon Ducks to the Elite Eight last year.

THOMAS BOYD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

against 14th-seeded Iona.

Oregon went 29-5 in the regular season to finish co-champions of the Pac 12. A No. 1 seed in the NCAA tournament last season, they're seeded third in the Midwest Region this year after losing to Arizona in Saturday's Pac 12 final. That game came hours after learning Boucher was done for the season, having torn his ACL the previous night.

Regardless of who's missing, and where they're seeded, Brooks said the Ducks' goal remains unchanged.

DEEP RUN

Oregon is gunning for its first Final Four appearance since 1939.

"National championship," he said. "It's the same tournament, we're all here for the same thing, to win, and wherever we're at we're competitors, we're confident in ourselves, and wherever we're at we're ready to play."

Brooks, a 21-year-old from Mississauga, Ont., led the Ducks to an appearance in the Elite Eight last season. The six-foot-six guard averaged 16.0 a game this season, bouncing back from what could have been a devastating broken foot suffered in the off-season.

"He's just a very high energy, highly active, very skilled scorer," said McIntyre, who worked with Brooks in CIA Bounce, the AAU program he co-founded. "He goes out and changes the pace of the game, does what his team needs, and that's to score and get buckets."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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*No purchase necessary. Entry period is Monday, February 6, until Friday, March 31, 2017 at 11:59 pm. Odds of winning depend on total number of people who enter. One entry per person. Details available online at www.metronews.ca/panel.

NHL

Coyotes' Chayka on steep learning curve

While taking in a Panthers game on break from the NHL general managers in Florida earlier this month, the youngest GM in pro sports history picked the brain of one of hockey's greatest players and savviest managers.

John Chayka wanted to know how Steve Yzerman went about constructing Team Canada's Olympic and world championship teams, and how the process helped him develop as a manager.

"And I don't know how much it helps me in my situation in Arizona too much ... (but) at the same time I think you can always apply logic or learn no matter what the background is," Chayka said of conversations with the hall of famer and Tampa Bay Lightning GM.

The Arizona Coyotes' 27-year-old GM has tried to absorb as

many lessons as possible in his first year on the job, from building relationships with more experienced colleagues to handling trade talks at the deadline to figuring out how to best to manage time. It's all new for the Jordan Station, Ont., native, a shocking hire by the Coyotes at age 26 last spring.

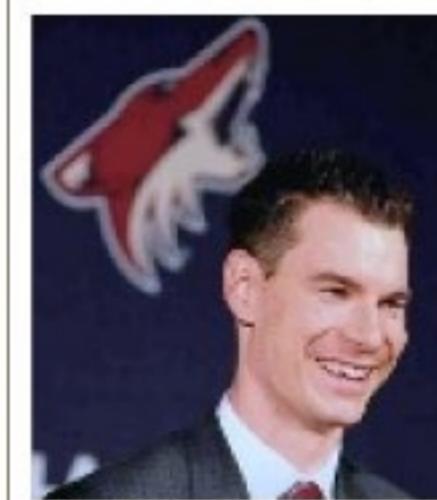
The GMs fraternity in the NHL is prototypical of an old boys club, populated by former players, coaches and managers. The average age of the other 30 GMs is 54 with the oldest of the group, 74-year-old Lou Lamoriello, hired into the league in 1987 before

Chayka was even born in 1989.

Chayka hints that his age has been "an issue" in his first-year dealings as GM, nothing malicious, he says, "but there is the reality that you are the youngest person in the room."

Still, he contends that his unique viewpoint serves as a helpful counterbalance in trades with some of his fellow GMs because his wants and needs may differ from competitors.

"So for me it's an opportunity as much as a challenge to find fits that work for me, but also work on the other side of things and that's how transactions are made," Chayka said. "I think it's actually been pretty productive, even if it's not as comfortable as someone who's known someone for 20 years."



John Chayka THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



U.S. women threaten to boycott worlds

HOCKEY

Canada rivals say pay equity is responsible for unrest

The Canadian women's hockey team can only watch and wait to see if they'll play chief rival United States in the world championship on American ice.

The U.S. women declared Wednesday they'll boycott the world championship starting March 31 in Plymouth, Mich., unless progress is made settling a wage dispute with USA Hockey. American players say they will not report next Wednesday to their training camp in Tawas City, Mich., without steps towards a new contract.

A few hours after that bombshell dropped, Canadian players on a conference call were still trying to get their heads around the possibility the host country and defending champion could be absent from the biggest women's hockey tournament this calendar year.

"It is difficult to imagine," said defenceman Lauriane Rougeau of Beaconsfield, Que.

"But we respect their decision. We hope they're moving towards a positive agreement in the coming days, so that we would be able to have a good championship."

Canada is scheduled to open the tournament against the U.S.



The Canada-U.S. hockey rivalry is at risk of being put on hold at this year's world championship. DAVE CHIDLEY/THE CANADIAN PRESS

\$1,000

According to the statement released by a law firm representing players, USA Hockey has paid players \$1,000 a month during their six-month Olympic residency period and "virtually nothing" the rest of the time.

on March 31. Canada and the U.S. have met in every world championship final dating back to the first in 1990. The Americans have won three straight titles.

"To voluntarily take ourselves out of the running to (repeat) is not easy, but it's what's right and we're asking for what's right and fair," U.S. forward Jocelyne Lamoureux-Davidson told The Associated Press.

"It's definitely hard. But as a group we've made this decision and as a team and I'm proud to do this with my teammates and to stand arm in arm with them and to say enough is enough."

There currently isn't labour unrest among Canada's players, who intend to report next week to their training camp in Leamington, Ont.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



It is difficult to imagine but we respect their decision.

Canada's Lauriane Rougeau

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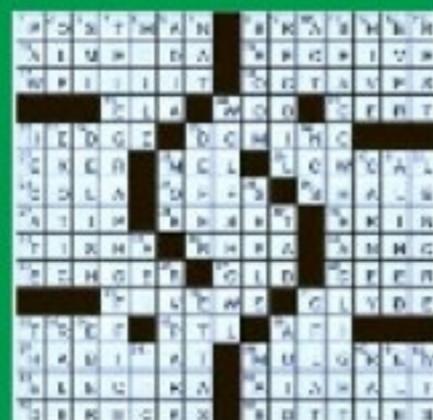
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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Pep casts glare at Man City front line

Rather than blaming his defence for conceding soft goals, Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola pointed to a lack of aggression and personality as decisive factors in his side's 3-1 defeat to Monaco in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Turning around a 5-3 deficit from the first leg appeared to be a tall order for Monaco, but instead it looked too easy as the home side cruised into a 2-0 lead within 30 minutes and then quickly responded to City's brief second-half push to reach the quarter-finals on away goals.

Monaco was given far too

much space throughout and attacked in waves.

"It's not about the defence. Our strikers have to be aggressive and pick the ball up, but we didn't. That's why we are out," Guardiola said referring to his forward trio of Sergio Aguero, Kevin De Bruyne and Raheem Sterling.

"Our strength is to be aggressive without the ball. We were a little bit slow in everything," Guardiola said.

We wanted to show personality ... we forgot to do that in the first half.

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola

GETTY IMAGES

Monaco's third and decisive goal came from a very British-looking set piece, as midfielder

Tiemoue Bakayoko rose to head home Thomas Lemar's curling cross in the 77th minute. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



IN BRIEF

Hightower decides on Pats

The Patriots have re-signed Pro Bowl linebacker Dont'a Hightower.

Hightower's agency, SportsTrust Advisors, tweeted the agreement on Wednesday and his agent Pat Dye, Jr. confirmed it. The new pact is for four years and \$43.5 million.

It brings back one of the Patriots' biggest free agents, who has helped New England win two Super Bowls in his five NFL seasons.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Djokovic falls in California

Novak Djokovic's 19-match winning streak at the BNP Paribas Open ended in a 6-4, 7-6 (3) fourth-round upset loss to Nick Kyrgios on Wednesday.

It was Kyrgios' second win over the world's second-ranked player in two weeks, having beaten Djokovic in straight sets at Acapulco on March 2.

Djokovic was bidding for a fourth consecutive title at the desert tournament.

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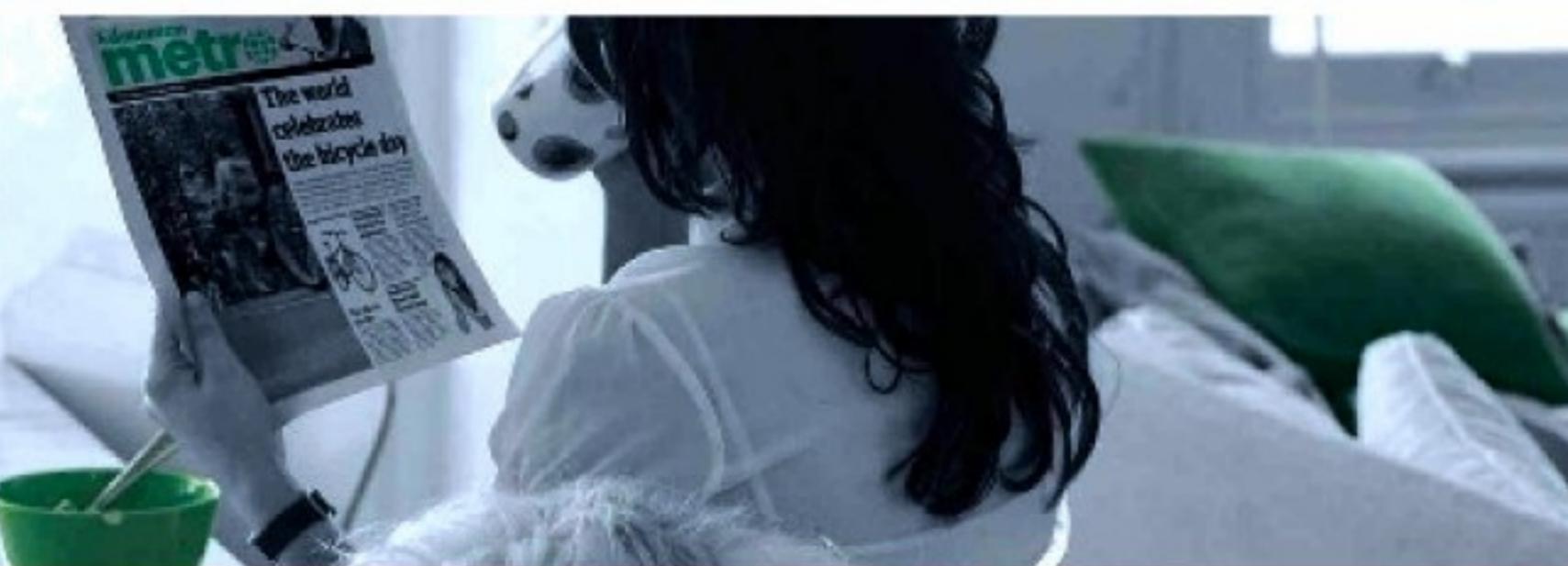
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Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

We think dinner sides should be as important (and as delicious) as the main event. If you're looking for a healthier update on everyone's salty addiction, then these sweet potato fries are your ticket to crispiness.

Ready in 40 minutes

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 30 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients

- 3 medium Sweet Potatoes
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1 Tbsp salt
- 1 Tbsp Chinese 5-spice

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

Peel and slice sweet potatoes into match sticks. Lay them flat on that cut side and make thin strips. Then turn those strips on their sides and cut into more fine slices. (The skinnier you make them, the crispier they're going to be.)

2. Mix your spices in a large bowl. Pour oil over the spice blend and combine well. Throw in your potatoes and toss until they're completely covered. Lay them out in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Use two sheets if they're looking crowded.

3. Place in a hot oven and bake for 25 to 30 minutes. Take out at the 15-minute mark and turn them over with tongs or a spatula. Keep an eye on them at the end as the edges will char (not that that's a bad thing).

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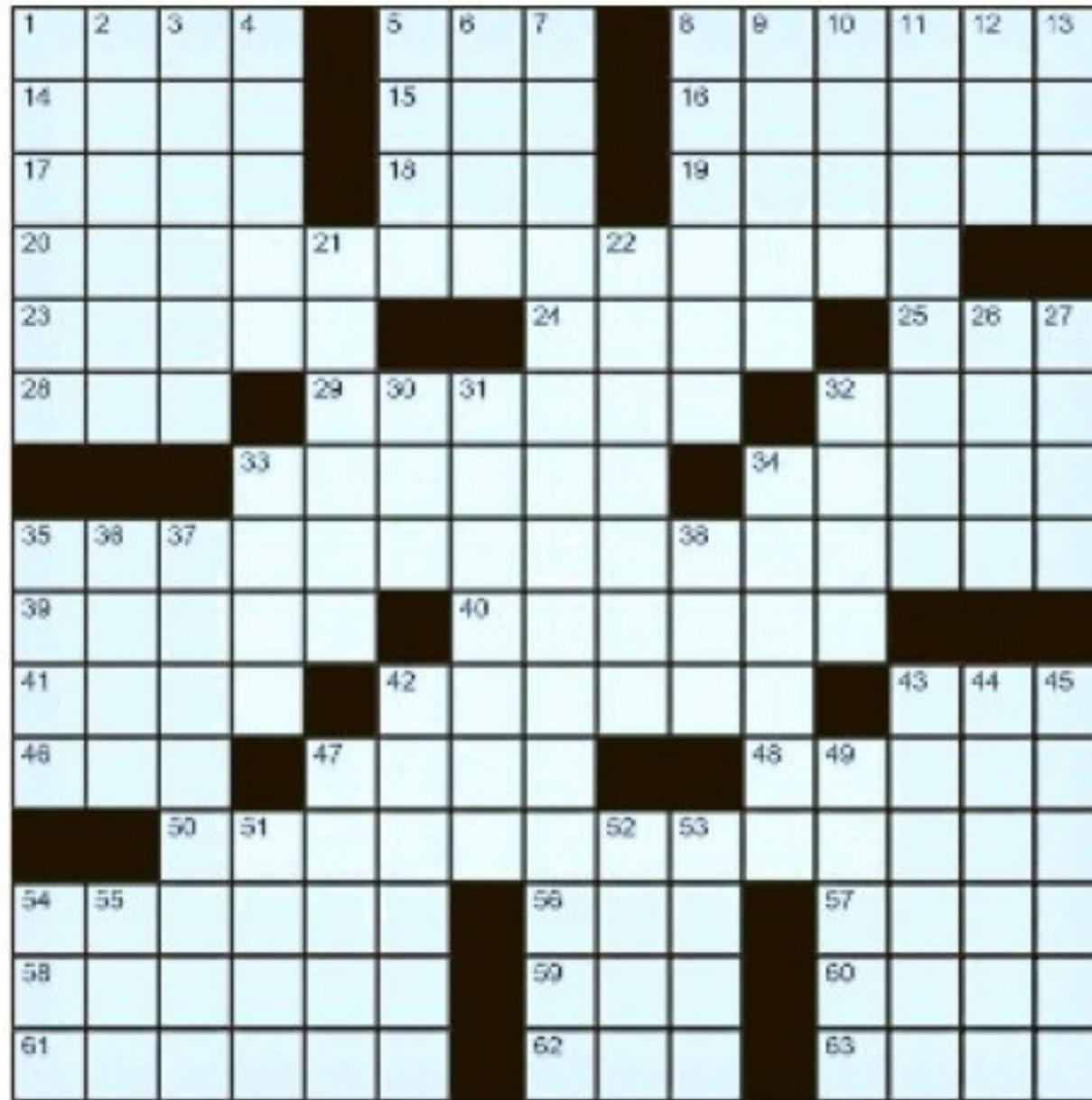
PHOTO: MARY VANNON

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

ACROSS

1. Celebrity
5. Descriptive wd.
8. Novelist Ms. Jong's
14. Barge __ (Intrude)
15. Mr. Rawls
16. Opera: The Three __
17. Literature governess Jane
18. NB's ocean
19. Ms. Sevigny's
20. Moist-soil-loving tree sometimes found in southern Ontario: 3 wds.
23. Country singer Ms. Tucker
24. Single-named Art Deco designer
25. Canadian comic Mr. Green
28. Group of Seven painter Mr. Jackson, et al.
29. Relating to digestion
32. Magic spell
33. Melon coming from the name of the former name of Turgutlu, a town in Turkey
34. Tom of "The Dukes of Hazzard"
35. Lester B. Pearson won the Nobel Peace Prize for his diplomacy in de-escalating this 1956 dilemma in Egypt: 3 wds.
39. Assuage
40. US Supreme Court Justice Ms. Kagan's
41. Omaha, __
42. Navy titles, e.g.: 2 wds.
43. Jolly: French
46. Racing's Mr. Fabi
47. Prefix to 'matic'
48. Fashionable accessory
49. Regina's beautiful park: 2 wds.
54. Attribute
55. Post-op locale
56. Norwegian king
58. Make the shower



DOWN

1. Party with a piñata
2. Regardless/nonetheless
3. "Happy Days" star Erin's
4. Foe
5. "There ought to be ___ against that!"
6. Shakespearean verb

7. Shakespeare-inspired architectural features: 2 wds.
8. "Yada, Yada...": 2 wds.
9. Till again
10. "To Live and Die ___" (1985)
11. Stove surfaces

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

5	9	8	3	5	6
3	7	9			
5			9	1	
2				3	
1	3		8		
		8	6	7	
9		4	5	1	
8	2				

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* IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Please remember that this is a wonderful year for partnerships for you. It's a great year for Aries to get married. This also includes entering into a business partnership.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
This year is the best year in over a decade for you to get a better job or improve your existing job. Likewise, it's the best year in over a decade to improve your health.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Plan on fun holidays this year, because this is a great time to take vacations, explore the arts, be active in sports and enjoy playful activities with children.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
It's important to know that this is the year to create your dream home. You can either improve your existing home or get a better home. It's an excellent time for real-estate investments.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You are in such a positive frame of mind this year. You will succeed in whatever you do, because you believe in yourself. This is how the power of positive thinking works!

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Look for ways to boost your earnings, because you can do it. In fact, this is the best year in over a decade for you to make more money. Yahoo!

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Lucky you! For the first time since 2005, lucky Jupiter is in your sign. This brings you good fortune and contentment for the whole year. It won't happen again until 2028.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
This year, different experiences will occur that will enrich your spiritual life. Your belief will be stronger, and this in turn will give you more confidence in your future.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
This is a popular year for Sagittarians! However, it's important to know that your interactions with others will benefit you. Join clubs and groups. Be friendly!

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You can put your name up in lights this year, because your reputation will shine. You will earn the respect of your peers.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Not since 2005 have you had the travel opportunities you will have this year. Make plans to go places! It's a great year for school and education as well.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
This is the perfect year to get a mortgage or loan, because you can benefit from the wealth and resources of others. Financial negotiations will settle in your favour.

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